

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-30 and 43-54 under prior art grounds. These rejections are fully traversed below.

Claims 1, 17, 24, 45 and 53 have been amended to further clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention. Thus, claims 1-30 and 43-54 remain pending.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-30 AND 43-54 UNDER 35 USC §§ 102(b), 103(a)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 45-51 and 53 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Edgar et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,848,395); and rejected claims 1-30, 43, 44, 52 and 54 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Edgar et al. in view of Hanzek (U.S. Patent No. 6,654,726). These rejections are fully traversed below.

Claim 1 pertains to a method for dynamically creating a schedule of timeslot segments for a plurality of routes and timeslots. Generally, claim 1 creates a set of schedulable timeslot segments for each of a set of routes for a selected day based on available route types obtained using a calendar and a template. Thereafter, an electronic storefront program can schedule at least one delivery stop "using one or more of the set of schedulable timeslot segments, the at least one delivery stop being for delivery of a product or service." Claim 1, lines 15-17.

Edgar et al. pertains to an appointment booking and scheduling system for booking appointments with operatives who visit customer sites. Although Edgar et al. makes reference to routes 31 in the database 11, these routes are NOT based on available route types determined by a template, as is recited in claim 1. At best, one can only argue that Edgar et al. describes having different routes in the database 11. However, Edgar et al. does not appear to provide any teaching or suggestion for different route types, let alone route types that are available as determined by a template.

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Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that "[t]he tables 30 containing a plurality of routes 31 ... are interpreted as a template." Office Action, page 13. Applicants respectfully disagree. To support the assertion, on page 13 of the Office Action, the Examiner states: "As seen in Edgar et al, the route types are defined by geographic region (i.e., A, B, C, etc.), wherein the region includes a number of routes associated therein (column 1, lines 59-60 and figure 2). As such, tables 30 (i.e., template) are indeed defined by route type (i.e., region), which may not include the particular routes, as seen in figure 3, wherein the tables are merely divided by region." Applicants respectfully disagree. The tables 30 in Edgar et al. are merely daily schedules of routes for use by a particular operative.

More particularly, in Fig. 3 of Edgar et al. each table 30 pertains to a day of the week and includes routes. Each route has a number of jobs associated with it, each job can identify a region to be visited by the operative. Thus a route is separated into different geographic regions A, B, C, etc. The operative's time is then allocated over the different geographic regions. In other words, Edgar et al. does not select a route based on the regions the route might cover. Instead, once a route is selected in Edgar et al., then the regions for the route are known.

In distinct contrast, in claim 1 the routes are determined based on the route types. The regions in Edgar et al. are not used to determine which routes to select. Instead, the regions for a route in Edgar et al. are identified after the route is selected. Still further, the routes recited in claim 1 are specifically recited as not being separated with respect to route types, whereas in Edgar et al. the routes are separated by regions.

Consequently, with reference to claim 1, Edgar et al. fails to teach or suggest any template that includes route types but not the routes. Also Edgar et al. provides no teaching or suggestion to use the routes types to determine a set of routes. Also, as explained above, the regions in Edgar et al. can also not be route types as recited in claim 1. Indeed, Edgar et al. teaches against these features of claim 1.

Still further, claim 1 recites:

wherein an electronic storefront system
thereafter schedules at least one delivery stop
using one or more of the set of schedulable

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timeslot segments, the at least one delivery stop being for delivery of a product or service.

Claim 1, lines 15-17.

On page 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner admits that Edgar et al. fails to disclose an electronic storefront system. However, to overcome this deficiency, the Examiner combines Hanzek with Edgar et al. While Hanzek does permit online ordering, nothing in Hanzek teaches or suggests scheduling delivery stops. With reference to Fig. 4B, Hanzek mentions vehicle availability and a vehicle delivery schedule. Hence, the delivery in Hanzek seems to be concerned with informing a user of availability of certain vehicles. A customer can also opt to receive delivery status update reports. In any event, Hanzek does not teach or suggest scheduling delivery stops using a set of schedulable timeslot segments.

Additionally, it should be noted that Hanzek fails to teach or suggest the other deficiencies of Edgar et al. noted above. For example, Hanzek et al. fails to teach or suggest a template as recited in claim 1.

Therefore, even if Hanzek were to be combined with Edgar et al, the combination would fail to teach or suggest claim 1. In addition, it is submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not combine the appointment booking and scheduling system for operatives (e.g., service engineers) to visit customers as in Edgar et al. with the online communication schema for inquiring and tracking status of online orders of Hanzek. Motivation to combine cannot be based on hindsight reconstruction. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1 is patentably distinct from Edgar et al, alone or in combination with Hanzek.

Claim 17 pertains to a computer readable medium that contains instructions for controlling a computer processor to dynamically create a schedule of timeslot segments for a plurality of routes and timeslots. The instructions cause performance of operations similar to the operations recited in claim 1. Hence, for reasons similar to those noted above with respect to claim 1, it is submitted that claim 17 is also patentably distinct from Edgar et al, alone or in combination with Hanzek.

Claim 24 pertains to a computer-based home delivery scheduling system that makes use of a template, timeslots and available routes. Further, claim 24 recites "wherein the template is a master pattern from which a copy may be made to create a schedule, wherein the template includes available route types, but not routes, wherein the routes are determined based on the available route types, and wherein each of the routes is not separated into the available route types" and "thereafter using the scheduled timeslot segments to schedule deliveries of products and services purchased at an electronic storefront." Neither Edgar et al. nor Hanzek teaches or suggests the template or use thereof as recited in claim 24.

Claim 45 pertains to a method for creating a schedule of timeslot segments for a plurality of routes and timeslots. Among other things, available routes are determined based on at least in part on "a template storing predetermined routes for each day of the week, the predetermined routes stored within the template having route types, the at least one available route not being separated into the available route types, and information within the template being independent of particular delivery persons." Hence, there is nothing in Edgar et al. that teaches or suggest the template recited in claim 45. It is submitted that claim 45 is also patentably distinct from Edgar et al.

Claim 53 pertains to a computer readable medium including computer program code for creating a schedule of timeslots for a plurality of routes. Among other things, available routes are determined based on at least one possible route type for a selected day and on a set of predetermined routes for the day of the week, the predetermined routes having route types, and the route types being independent of geographic location. There is nothing in Edgar et al. that teaches or suggest determining available routes in the manner recited in claim 53. Among other things, the table 30 in Edgar et al. is a daily schedule of routes for use by a particular operative. The routes are separated into different geographic regions A, B, C, etc. Consequently, the regions cannot correspond to route types which are independent of geographical location as recited in claim 1. It is submitted that claim 53 is also patentably distinct from Edgar et al.

Claim 54 pertains to a computer-implemented method for operating an online store to enable a user to purchase goods or services over a network. In rejecting claim 54, the Examiner relies on a combination of Edgar et al. and Hanzek. However, as noted above, one of ordinary skill in the art would not combine the appointment booking and scheduling system for operatives (e.g., service engineers) to visit customers as in Edgar et al. with the online communication schema for inquiring and tracking status of online orders of Hanzek. Motivation to combine cannot be based on hindsight reconstruction. Moreover, both Edgar et al. and Hanzek do not teach or suggest scheduling a delivery based on an attribute that depends on both the selected day and the day of week, but not pertaining to time of day. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 54 is patentably distinct from Edgar et al, alone or in combination with Hanzek.

Based on the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 1, 17, 24, 45, 53 and 54 are patentably distinct from Edgar et al, alone or in combination with Hanzek. In addition, it is submitted that dependent claims 2-16, 18-23, 25-30, 43, 44 and 46-52 are also patentably distinct for at least the same reasons as their corresponding independent claim. The additional limitations recited in the independent claims or the dependent claims need not be further discussed as the above discussed limitations are clearly sufficient to distinguish the claimed invention from Edgar et al, alone or in combination with Hanzek.

Thus, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 45-51 and 53 under 35 USC §102(b) as well as the rejection of claims 1-30, 43, 44, 52 and 54 under 35 USC §103(a).

SUMMARY

It is submitted that claims 1-30 and 43-54 are patentably distinct from the cited references. Reconsideration of the application and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

If there are any issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment,

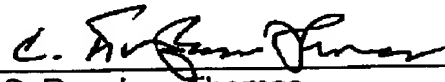
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the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Applicants hereby petition for an extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension or any further fee required in connection with the filing of this Amendment is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0388 (Order RLC1G000).

Respectfully submitted,

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